DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 492 IR 052 169

AUTHOR Echelman, Shirley, Ed.
TITLE The Role of Library Associations as Effective Pressure Groups for Political Action. IFLA Professional Reports 14.
INSTITUTION International Federation of Library Associations, The Hague (Netherlands).
REPORT NO ISBN-90-70916-17-7
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 30p.; Papers originally presented at the Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations (Chicago, IL, 1985) and at the IFLA Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (The Hague, Netherlands, 1987).
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administration; Foreign Countries; Institutional Advancement; International Organizations; Legislators; *Libraries; *Library Associations; Lobbying; *Policy Formation; *Political Influences; *Public Policy
IDENTIFIERS Information Policy; Jamaica; *Library Development; Poland; Scandinavia; United States; Yugoslavia

ABSTRACT

This document includes five reports originally presented at two meetings of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) held respecively in 1985 and 1987. In "Public Policy on LIbraries," Hector Wynter, a member of the Jamaican Parliament, describes the role of the legislator in the development of libraries in Jamaica. "The Role of the Polish Librarians Association in the Creation of Library and Information Policy in Poland," by Stefan Kubow, president of the Association, provides a historical summary of its role in influencing the formation and implementation of government policy concerning libraries and information in Poland. "Political Persuasion by Library Associations for the National Development of Libraries--The View of the Scandinavian Library Association" (Margareta Torngren, Swedish Library Association) focuses on the efforts of library associations in Denmark and Sweden to promote the development of public libraries; and "The Role and Importance of a Small Nation's Librarians Association within the Multinational State" (Martina Sircelj, Slovak Library Association) describes the development of Slovene libraries and current challenges faced by Yugoslav library associations. . Finally, in "Persuading Politicians to Support U.S. Libraries," Eileen Cooke of the American Library Association (ALA) describes the ALA's efforts to win Congressional support for library programs. References to 14 IFLA Professional Reports are provided. (KM)

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IFLA

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Shirley Echelman

THE ROLE OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AS EFFECTIVE PRESSURE GROUPS FOR POLITICAL ACTION

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PROFESSIONAL REPORTS 14

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International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

IFLA Professional Reports, No. 14

The Role of Library Associations as Effective Pressure Groups for Political Action

Edited by

Shirley Echelman

IFLA Round Table for the Management of Library Associations
IFLA Headquarters
The Hague
1987

Recommended catalogue entry:

Echelman, Shirley, editor:
The role of library associations as effective pressure groups for political action / edited by Shirley Echelman under the auspices of the Round Table for the Management of Library Associations. - The Hague : IFLA Headquarters, 1987. - 28 p.; 30 cm. - (IFLA Professional Reports : 14)
ISBN 90-70916-17-7
ISSN 0168-1931

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Preface

These papers were originally presented at the 1985 Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in Chicago, Illinois. They formed the Program Session of the IFLA Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (RTMLA). The Round Table, established in 1982, seeks to assist associations of libraries and librarians to improve their capacity to serve their members and to influence the improvement of library services throughout the world.

Public Policy on Libraries

Hector Wynter*

I have been asked to speak to you on the role of the legislator in the development of libraries in a small developing country. My credentials for speaking about this role consist of three years (1962-1965) as the First Chairman of the Jamaica Library Board, as Jamaica's representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO (1970-1976 and 1980-1985), and as a Minister of Government and Senator in the Jamaican Parliament (1965-1972).

Jamaica is an English-speaking country situated in the Caribbean Sea, with a population of 2.2 million. It is the largest of the group of islands formerly known as the British West Indies.

There were no education programmes for the population during the earlier years of Jamaica's development. It was not until the end of the 19th century that an organized educational system began to emerge. The mid 20th century saw the development of a structure that embraces pre-school through university levels. It is against this background that libraries in Jamaica began to develop.

In their earlier days, libraries were the perquisite of the elite. The large-scale establishment and use of libraries followed improvements in the country's educational and economic programmes. The earliest libraries were subscription libraries designed to serve a limited and specialized clientele. It was not until 1874 that the first public library was opened; this collection became the nucleus of the library of the Institute of Jamaica founded in 1879.

The Board of Governors of the Institute of Jamaica recognized the need for a free public library service and encouraged and supported emerging library organizations. On its initiative a survey of library needs was undertaken in 1945 by Miss Nora Bateson. The Bateson report later became the basis of the island-wide Jamaica Library Service.

This service began as a result of an offer conveyed to the House of Representatives by Governor Sir John Huggings for the establishment of a public library service with financial assistance from the British Council. From 1949-1962 the Minister of Education was named by law to sit on the Jamaica Library Board but refrained from attending meetings to prevent a conflict of interest in the wider interpretation of his responsibilities. His nominated representative was therefore responsible for setting policy as a member of the Board.

Jamaica has been fortunate that its government has always recognized the importance of library services to its development. The colonial administration gave generous grants to the Institute of Jamaica and the Jamaica Library Service to maintain library services. Today this trend continues. The two major political parties have supported the development and expansion of libraries.

My understanding and appreciation of the needs of libraries in a small developing country began in 1962 with my appointment as Chairman of the Jamaica Library Board. This exposure assisted me in coming to grips with policy and helped me to persuade my colleagues to grant funds to improve library services.

I was fortunate to have been my country's representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO from 1970 to 1976 and again from 1980 to 1985. The Jamaican government applied to UNESCO for assistance with a library school and Professor Danton came to the island as a consultant to the project. As a result, UNESCO agreed to provide assistance to establish a Department of Library Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona. As a member of the Cabinet at that time, I was given the task of convincing the other 14 territories that support the University to agree to the school. We obtained this agreement and the library school has done well.

I cite the above only to illustrate the role of the legislator in library development in a small developing country. The appreciation by the government at that time of the importance of libraries was shown in its establishment in 1974 of a National Council on Libraries, Archives & Documentation Services (NACOLADS). This body was assisted by UNESCO under its NATIS programme. A new Institute of Jamaica Law in 1978 provided for the establishment of a National Library which, based on the collections, services, and staff of the West Indian Reference Library, commenced operations in April 1979.

Based on our experiences I leave you with some simple guidelines to follow for the development of an effective library policy:

1. Find trained and motivated librarians to head the service;
2. Motivate a small number of public figures with the missionary spirit for books and their publication;
3. Avoid involvement in political partisanship by urging all parties to support libraries and their development.
4. Use all international agencies available.
5. Support staff training staff and better working conditions.

* Hector Wynter is a Member of the Jamaican Parliament.

The Role of the Polish Librarians Association in the Creation of Library and Information Policy in Poland

Stefan Kubow*

Professional librarians' associations are not very popular in socialist countries. These associations, usually of national character, may be found only in some such countries. In Czechoslovakia, for example, which consists of two republics, an organization associating librarians and people dealing with information exists only in Slovakia. The Czech librarians' organization was disbanded in 1968. Librarians' associations in socialist countries bring together librarians and information workers in special groups or in local branches. Most of these organizations unite individuals; only in the German Democratic Republic does the organization associate institutions as a whole.

The Polish Librarians Association (PLA) is the oldest and largest professional librarians' organization in the socialist world. It was founded in 1917, even before Poland regained independence after 123 years of partition. From the very beginning, the organization sought to create solid grounds for the development of library management in newly-built state structures. These efforts produced rather modest results, the greatest achievement being the introduction of national regulations concerning cataloguing and the status of academic libraries and librarians. However, the problem of national libraries, most important for common literary pursuits, has not been solved.

Efforts to develop a National Library Act were interrupted by World War I. One-fourth of the members of the PLA were killed during the war; but during that period, a group of outstanding activists of the Association continued working on organizational principles for library management in Poland. They worked out plans for protection and concentration of library collections, developed a framework for a library education programme, and drafted a document, passed in April 1946 as the Library and Care for Collections Law. This Law established a state network of libraries supervised by the Main Board of Libraries at the Ministry of Education. As a result, by 1948 there were 14,500 libraries in Poland--more than before the war, when Polish territory was bigger by 60 thousand square kilometers.

The PLA played an important part in the formulation of rules and implementation of library policy during the first four years after the war. The Association was the chief organizer of education of librarians, who were in great demand at that time. It also published numerous handbooks and was the main editor of professional periodicals. In retrospect, this period was a very fortunate one for the Association.

During 1949-1955 there was a noticeable decrease in social movement in all fields and activities, including the librarians' organization. Librarianship lost its position in society. In 1951 a serious disintegration of library management took place. The network of state libraries, supervised up to that time by one centre, became a sum of several small networks of libraries, supervised by various state departments having almost nothing in common with each other. The PLA, at that time a joint organization of librarians and archivists, tried to draw attention to the weakness of the new structure of library management and demanded re-establishment of a strong centre to coordinate the activities of Polish librarianship.

After 1956, on the wave of restoration of democratic liberties, the Association strengthened its position somewhat. It again became an organization solely of librarians. The Council of Culture and Art was created in 1957 within the Ministry of Culture and Art. The Department of Libraries and Reading was created within the Council, with the president of the PLA as its chairman. Within this structure, the president of the Association was able to submit to the government the opinions of the professionals he represented. This did not, however, have great influence on state policy concerning libraries.

At the beginning of the 1960s the Association took the initiative of proposing a Library Act. The law passed in 1946 had lost its value with the changing conditions in Poland. The initiators hoped to rebuild the position of librarianship and re-integrate a national network of libraries. During the work on the new act, a significant divergence of opinion became evident. Organs of state administration were not interested in change and opposed the Association's insistence on the coordination of library management. Representatives of the PLA tried to convince particular ministries to cooperate with the Ministry of Culture and Art. As usual in such cases a compromise was chosen. The Act, passed on April 9, 1968, retained the division of libraries into several independent networks; but gave the Ministry of Culture and Art responsibility for implementation of the new law, in consultation with other state departments. The Ministry of Culture and Art was also charged to coordinate the activities of all the libraries in the country in such fields as specialization of library collections, interlibrary exchange and loan, protection and conservation of collections, information and recording activities, normalization and rationalization of library work, and education of librarians and improvement in their qualifications. To fulfill all these tasks, a State Library Council consisting of 20 members, including four delegates from the Polish Librarians Association, was created in 1969 within the Ministry of Culture and Art.

The creation of the Council gave rise to great hopes that library management would become a more active social concern, and that the role of the Ministry of Culture and Art in this field would be strengthened. Initially, these hopes were justified. The State Library Council published a report about the state of libraries (1974) and a programme of library development in Poland up to 1990 (1976). But the second document was never accepted by the government and remained known only within the circle of librarians. In the ensuing years the Council was divided into separate sections and lost its effectiveness in integrating Polish librarianship. The Council's work slowed down and finally stopped completely in 1980.

At the end of 1983, as a result of insistent demands by the PLA, the Minister of Culture and Art re-appointed the Council. Since then it has been working on a programme of library development up to the year 2000 as well as on amendments to the Library Act. Does this mean a new chance for re-integration of State policy concerning libraries? No, it does not. First of all, the government is not interested in the results of the State Library Council's work, and the Ministry of Culture and Art is not strong enough to carry its plans into effect. For example, the suggestions accepted in 1984 by the Council concerning academic education of librarians, then addressed to the Ministry of Education and Schools of Academic Rank, have produced no reaction.

The fact that the Ministry of Culture and Art treats its responsibility for implementation of the Library Act in a very limited way is an even more important cause for pessimism. The Ministry is responsible actually only for those libraries that are its direct subordinates, e.g., the National Library, the Slaska Library in Katowice, and public libraries. Recently, as a result of librarians' pressure, the Ministry widened

its interest to include libraries for patients in hospitals and libraries in industrial plants, run by trade unions up to 1980 and then left to themselves.

When the Teachers' Charter was passed in 1972 and amended ten years later, and when the Academic Schools Act was passed in 1982, the input of the Ministry of Culture and Art was missing. Therefore the differences between school libraries and academic libraries and, above all, the difference in the situation of their librarians, has widened. School librarians carry the professional title of teacher-librarian. In academic libraries, some librarians are treated as researchers and the rest--about 80%--are "other workers," similar to transport workers and firefighters. Work on amendments to the Academic Schools Act is going on at the moment. The PLA has submitted its suggestions to the Parliament; however, the Ministry of Culture and Art has shown no interest in the matter.

In 1983-1984, at the suggestion of the Ministry of Culture and Art, the Parliament drafted a bill concerning the wider dissemination of culture. This draft led to further disintegration of libraries, because it concerned only public libraries. In response to this situation, the Association, whose representatives took part in the parliamentary committee, focused its efforts on defense of the 1968 Library Act. Because of this, the resulting Act, passed in April 1984, referred to public libraries and their staff only, but contained a clause stating that it did not violate the Library Act. This solution is less than fully satisfactory, because the new Act regulates the rights and duties of librarians in public libraries in a different way than they are regulated in other kinds of libraries. There are different bases of compensation and different staff policies.

The Ministry of Culture and Art has, in fact, initiated only two regulations in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Schools of Academic Rank, and the General Secretary of the Polish Academy of Science: one in 1979 concerning specialization in library collections, and the other in 1984, concerning foreign publications not permitted circulation in Poland. This shows clearly how narrowly the Ministry treats its role as coordinator of the Library Act. The latest Conference of Delegates of the Polish Librarians Association in May 1985 was one great call to the Ministry of Culture and Art to assume full responsibility for the development of all of Polish librarianship. However, the Ministry has refused to respond to this call.

In the present situation, the PLA seeks to cooperate with many departments and state institutions as well as with political parties in accomplishing the Association's desire to integrate professional work. By virtue of the Library Act and also because the majority of members are librarians from public libraries, the Association's main partner is the Ministry of Culture and Art. The Ministry also has administrative supervision over Association activities and subsidizes them. Apart from participating in the work of the State Library Council, the Association submits to the Ministry most of its suggestions concerning the whole state network of libraries, public libraries, and education of librarians. The Ministry supervises secondary schools for librarians.

The Association also submits to the Ministry its suggestions concerning salaries. Although according to the Library Act, salaries should be established by the government, these matters have always been resolved at a lower level. Most often there have been separate pay schedules for particular networks of librarians, and these have always been accepted by the government. It has, however, happened--and is happening more and more often--that the schedule for one network is adapted by other departments for other networks. For instance, in 1984 the Minister of Education and Schools of Academic Rank adapted a pay schedule for public librarians to librarians in academic schools, because it was more favorable for librarians than their previous one.

A new pay schedule is being prepared now at the Ministry of Education and Schools of Academic Rank and most probably will be even more favorable for librarians than the current schedule for public libraries.

Both the Act concerning dissemination of culture and the Act for Academic Schools provide that salaries should be adjusted to the changing economic situation of the country, and Poland is still undergoing steep devaluation. The PLA has accepted these separately-developed pay schedules and has submitted its own suggestions in the matter, as librarians' salaries are rather low and setting such precedents establishes grounds for achieving higher pay for other groups of librarians.

The Ministry of Education and Schools of Academic Rank is the Association's partner in matters concerning academic libraries. The president of the Association is a member of the Coordinating Committee for Libraries in Schools of Academic Rank, appointed by the Minister of Education in 1984. The majority of other members of this Committee are also members of the Association. The Ministry of Education is also the recipient of suggestions concerning academic libraries. Problems in schools for librarians have been neglected by the Association for a long time, because most of lecturers in these schools were not interested in becoming members of the Association. This was probably because most of them were not librarians themselves and did not identify with the profession. Such a situation has a negative influence on library education and on the profile of research carried on in these institutions, which often lose touch with practical needs of libraries.

In 1984 the Managing Board of the Association organized a Division of Schools for Librarians and announced that its main goal was to bring the program of library education and research closer to practical needs. Librarians showed great interest, but library schools, especially those of academic rank, were not greatly interested. The Ministry of Education has neither accepted the existence of the Division nor reacted in any way to suggestions submitted by it.

The Association hoped that the National Library would become its partner in matters of research, especially in its efforts to bring research closer to practice and to effect nationwide coordination of research. The National Library has its own scientific council consisting of scientists from the whole country, and an Institute of Books and Reading, created specifically to carry on research in librarianship. As a result of discussions, publications, and pressure exerted through the Ministry of Culture and Art, the Institute has redirected its research efforts in the required direction but has refused to play the role of coordinator.

The Association itself has established a special award in the field of library science and special prizes for the best master's degree theses concerning librarianship. Conferment of the first awards aroused great interest and perhaps will bring favorable changes.

The Association submits its suggestions concerning the network of over 20,000 school and pedagogical libraries to the Ministry of Education. Its influence is not very strong, as the majority of school librarians are not members of the PLA, but rather express their interests through the Polish Teachers Association.

Lack of integration in librarianship also has its consequences in the management of information activities. The Association was a co-initiator of a nationwide network of information with its main centre--the Centre of Scientific, Technical and Economic Information (CINTE). For about 20 years there was great mistrust between the libraries

and the information network, especially on the part of information workers. Very few of them are members of the Association. There have been efforts to create a separate organization during the last few years. At present, however, relations have been regulated by an agreement signed in 1983 concerning cooperation with CINTE. This agreement will not lead to the degree of integration of the activities of libraries and scientific information centres for which the PLA has hoped. On the other hand, successive amendments of the draft on scientific, technical and organizational information (SINTO) worked out by CINTE, do take into account the role of librarians to a greater degree. The latest draft, worked out in 1984, provides that all libraries in the country will participate in the system. This is the result of the cooperation agreement as well as the participation of the president of the PLA in the advisory council created in order to manage the system. Other members of the PLA have joined the scientific council of CINTE.

Cooperation with political parties is an important form of pressure exerted by the PLA on formulation and implementation of state policy concerning librarianship and information. The main partner in this area is the Polish United Worker Party, through both its Central Committee and local branches. Since the end of the 1970s a Team of Party Librarians has existed at the Culture Department of the Central Committee of the Party. The Team contains representatives of the Association and is an advisory body to the Party managers in matters of librarianship. During the last few years, on Central Committee demand, the Team elaborated viewpoints on issues including libraries in industrial plants, the situation of rural libraries, and staff policy in libraries. It has also pronounced a statement about the catalogue of a typical public library, prepared by National Library. A document "The State and Directions of Development of Libraries in Poland" was prepared in 1984 by the Team of Party Librarians in cooperation with the Polish Librarians Association. This document has been accepted by the Party managers as a programme of Party policy towards librarianship up to 1990. Party members working in various state departments, among them the above-mentioned ministries, have been obliged to implement the programme. A clause pointing out the irrational structure of library management and information activities in Poland has been included in the document at the suggestion of the PLA, but the resulting practical conclusions have not been agreed upon.

Besides participation in the Team of Party Librarians, the Association submits to the Party managers its postulations, which in case of acceptance are sent to proper organs of State administration to be implemented. In this way the Association representatives are able to participate in various advisory groups to the government and various ministries. Despite Party management understanding and sympathy, it has not been possible to improve publishing of professional library literature as the printing and paper industry in Poland are in difficulty. However, Party management enables the Association leaders to popularize their opinions in the press, radio and television.

The Association does not cooperate so closely with other political parties, which are less popular and influential among the Association members than the Polish United Worker Party. However, representatives of the PLA participate in congresses of other political parties, submit their suggestions concerning dissemination of books in the social circles represented by these organizations, popularize Association opinions in their press, and take part in their organizations' work concerning books and reading.

In 1983 the Main Board of the Polish Librarians Association undertook a very important--and very difficult--decision to join the so-called Patriotic Movement for National Revival (PRON). After the stormy years of 1980-1981—after difficult months of martial law--this move was a declaration of readiness for constructive cooperation

with the authorities in matters of interest to the professional organization of librarians. This also signified willingness to participate in the initiatives undertaken by this new social movement. State authorities have attached great importance to the movement and have bestowed significant privileges upon it. PRON became the main organizer of elections to people's councils, and the Association, as a collective member of the movement, gained the right to offer its candidates. Since the latest election almost 300 members of the Association sit on people's councils at various levels. Many of them act as managers. This creates opportunities to realize many librarians' expectations, especially with regard to school and public libraries. The Main Board of the Polish Librarians Association organizes meetings of librarian-councilors, encouraging them to act in local councils and to submit their suggestions to central authorities.

Another result of joining the Patriotic Movement for National Revival is participation of the Polish Librarians Association in the management of the movement and in its particular working teams, which deal with such matters as the size and profile of book production.

The Association, as a collective member of PRON has nominated candidates also to the national parliament. Up to the time of elections the Association will have been able to influence the works of Parliament through its representative on the Social-Economic Council, created in 1983. Apart from that, representatives of the Polish Librarians Association are invited, as experts, to participate in parliamentary work on legislation concerning libraries and information. Joint meetings of the Association's management and the parliamentary Culture Committee are organized from time to time.

Association representatives can also be found among members of the National Culture Committee, created in 1980 as a consulting body to the government. The Association wanted to put its allies into that group to promote cataloguing during printing and publishing books printed in large type for people with poor eyesight. However these ideas have not been advocated by editors more influential than librarians and thus have not been submitted to the government.

Academic conferences organized by the Polish Librarians Association are still another form of influencing the State policy concerning libraries and information. The National Conference for Information and Documentation, organized in 1958, may be the most spectacular example. In 1960, as a result of the Conference, the government passed a resolution concerning the development of technical and economic information in Poland. A series of conferences concerning library service for the sick and disabled serves as an example from the last few years. Due to the conferences, the problem was taken up by the Ministry of Culture and Art, which in 1984 financed the foundation of the Informative-Methodical Reading Centre for the Sick and Disabled.

Information activity can also be of great significance. The Association is carrying out this type of activity by publishing periodicals and bulletins; however, various factors reduce their effects. First, periodicals in Poland are published with great delay. Editors do not want to publish current information, and even if it is published, it gains little interest among librarians and authorities. Second, the content of librarians' periodicals is not of interest to the authorities (contrary to the situation in the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, or Czechoslovakia). This lack of interest is probably the main cause of the delay in regular publication of librarians' periodicals.

Information disseminated through mass media is much more effective. This has been proved by reactions to the interviews of and articles by members of the Association, especially critical ones. However, the Association does not have an active information policy; rather, it passively awaits such opportunities.

Generally, however, when the Association is able to influence formation and implementation of State policy concerning libraries and information, it takes advantage of these opportunities. However, the effects of this influence vary and are often insignificant. This results from the lack of a single institution responsible for all of Polish librarianship and information, which, in turn, results from lack of appreciation by society and the authorities of the role of librarianship in the development of civilization. The Association's activities also lack effectiveness because of its organizational weakness. Comprising over 10,000 members, and forced to cooperate with various institutions and departments responsible for libraries, it relies almost solely on its members' voluntary work; this framework reduces the possibility of consistent, planned, and hence successful action. Office support of the Main Board of the Polish Librarians Association and its working teams of experts has been strengthened only in the last two years. The first formal employee of the Association will not be taken on until the end of 1985, and even then will have only part-time status.

Until recently, the Association in its activities has not taken enough advantage of the experiences of similar foreign associations. Agreements concerning cooperation, signed with two very active librarians' organizations in Great Britian and in the German Democratic Republic during the last few years have increased such opportunities. The Association's biggest hope, however, lies in developing the activities of the Round Table on the Management of Library Associations, which should become the forum of exchange of experiences of professional librarians' organizations worldwide. The Polish Librarians Association joined IFLA as one of its first members. Now, again, it is one of the first to have joined IFLA's Round Table, hoping not only to set an example for other associations, but also to benefit fully from the experiences of other associations.

* Stefan Kubow is President of the Polish Librarians Association.

Political Persuasion by Library Associations for the National Development of Libraries: The View of the Scandinavian Library Associations

Margareta Torngren*

The topic of political persuasion by library associations for the national development of libraries is of high current interest in Scandinavia, where library associations in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are discussing organization and statutes. In this paper I will concentrate upon public libraries, because political persuasion in regard to research libraries is different due to its limitation to the state level. I will focus on the problems in Denmark and Sweden as they are very similar. There exists no united Scandinavian view among the library associations in the three countries, but their public library development and library associations have much in common. The countries hold the same basic view of the role of public libraries in a democracy--of their importance for availability of information and knowledge, free and equal to all.

The Danish, Norwegian and Swedish library associations each carry on their activities and work towards the goal of promoting national library development in a network which includes other library associations, politicians on all levels, political parties, ministries of culture, state library bureaus, library central agencies, authorities of vital interest, and various other organizations and unions. The library association in each country is by no means alone in promoting library development. But it is difficult to measure the association's strength in this effort.

When measured by the amount of policymaking and lobbying that are done in different areas of the library field, library associations are very strong. In all the three countries, they exert influence and promote library development by participating in different boards, committees, and investigations on state, regional, and local levels. They are all the recipients of questions for different government investigations. They are all involved in the debate about library development through their journals and other publications. They initiate research into new technology and educate politicians and professionals through comprehensive courses and conferences. The possibilities and channels for political persuasion seem endless.

On the other hand, the library associations are weak with reference to some particular issues. Sweden is a good example. Sweden is the only country in Scandinavia that has no library law. State support of public libraries is very small, only 2% of the total cost of operations. The local communities that finance public libraries have the responsibility of deciding the level and extent of local public library development. Political parties in Sweden, except for the Communist Party, have never accepted a library law because of their belief in community rights of self-determination.

During the last four years there has been a state investigation in Sweden of the goals and the role of public library in society. During these years, the Swedish library association has tried very hard to obtain a thorough analysis of the question of legislation. We were supported by many authorities and unions in our effort to persuade the politicians of the need for a library law. We realized that there could never be a comprehensive law fixing a minimum level of library service in a community and giving adequate state support to reach this goal. We could not even persuade the library commission to study this question. So we ended up demanding a minimal law that would confirm the need for public libraries managed by professional staff in every community, and above all the need for free library service.

By establishing this mini-library law, Sweden could have confirmed the importance of public libraries in society. That would not have cost the state any money at all, while it would have been of great political value. But we failed--we have not succeeded in persuading the politicians in the Ministry of Culture. And it is not sufficient comfort that all political parties, except for the Conservatives, now affirm the necessity of the free-loan principle. The consequences of having no law are already being paid. Conservatively-ruled communities are preparing to raise their fees--some have already done so--even for library cards. In September there will be a general election in Sweden. If conservative winds are blowing over the country, the public libraries certainly will have much harder times to face than before.

One way of looking upon the topic of political persuasion is to raise the following questions: Have the statutes and the organization of a library association anything to do with the strength of the association? Which library association is the best policy-maker and exerts the strongest political persuasion—one comprising only professionals, only politicians, or a mixture? These are some of the key current questions within the Danish and Swedish library associations, and there are no solutions yet. But the answers have nothing to do with the fact that the Swedish Library Association includes all types of libraries, or that the Danish Library Association does not include research libraries. Nor has it anything to do with the numbers of members.

No, the answers are found in funding and in membership. There are both institutional and individual members in the two library associations. Most of the income is paid by the institutional members. In addition to income from members, the Danish Library Association has had quite a bit of financial support from the state; the Swedish Library Association has had almost none. Until now politicians and professionals have been working within the library associations, side by side, on a fairly equal level as elected representatives for their members, quite unlike the situation in the communities where politicians are decisionmakers. In the informal and formal meetings between the two, the association has been strong, and there have been excellent opportunities for mutual political and professional persuasion. The library associations have been a good platform for interacting.

Membership fees from the rich institutional members and from the poor individual members have been shared on equal terms. But now the situation is changing. Politicians want another power structure which will have definite repercussions within the library associations. The chairman of a state committee investigating power in society recently gave a very interesting explanation. (This investigation has been going on for ten years in Norway and the results were presented this spring.) In an interview, the chairman expressed his regret that after ten years he must stop looking at the present interesting change of power in society. He had wanted to investigate in particular "the Nordic model" of solving problems by means of negotiation. During the post-war era, said the chairman, the Nordic model has had a high status. The different countries have been able to combine democracy, development of industrial democracy, and peaceful cooperation between labour and capital. Politics in the Nordic countries have been looked upon as fresh air and clean water - they have always been there and seemed unchangeable. But after 35 years, the Nordic model is not as strong as before. The reasons are change of economy, change of politics, change of cultural behaviour because of broader education, etc. Established organizations are losing their strength, at least in Norway, because negotiations are not the only solutions to problems. Parliamentarianism, hierarchic steering, and a freer market are growing in force. The public sector is criticized. All the countries seem to be seeking a new way to deal with the public sector—collectively, but not necessarily ruled by the state. All this creates a

very unsteady situation, and, according to the chairman, it is not at all clear how the Nordic model is going to develop in the future.

Changes in the economy have had an effect on parliamentarism and, of course, on political persuasion. Public library development in Denmark and Norway, for example, is adjusted by a library law and has been supported by state financing, where money was delivered from the state to the communities for the purpose of library development. During the past year, there has been a complete change in financing. State support is now decentralized and distributed to communities without any special designations. The local politicians can decide upon which needs should be covered within the communities. The new situation requires more intense political persuasion on the local level and causes some uncertainty as to the equal standard of library development in the country. In Sweden we have, as I already mentioned, no library law and little state support of public libraries. But in spite of the big differences that still exist among the public libraries within the communities, public libraries in Sweden have developed in rather positive ways, e.g., new areas of outreach activities, library service to ethnic minorities, and library service to industries.

These positive developments have occurred as politicians and professionals on different levels have worked harmoniously together toward these goals. This development was possible in a good economic climate. But now, as the economic situation has changed, budget cuts have hit the public libraries and affected the relationship between politicians and professionals. The politician suddenly has difficulties handling the requirements of cuts. He begins dealing with details and administration and partly takes over the professional's job. The politician and the professional seldom have the same ideas of ideal cuts, so old friends come into conflict. This development has now reached the library associations in Denmark and Sweden. The conflict within the Danish Library Association has now reached the point at which the politicians and even some librarians think that it would be better to change the library association into a purely political organization. They would make a clean break: the librarians would leave the library association and work within the union. Then they could speak and negotitate with the politicians on equal terms. But nothing is yet decided in Denmark. Many politicians and professionals are very concerned about this development.

In Sweden the same tendency is evident. There, the politicians talk about a new structure of power within the library association. A new plan for organizing the Swedish Library Association was put forward at the annual meeting of the Library Association in June of 1985. In this plan, the role of the professionals is considerably weakened. But it is necessary to add that in both Denmark and Sweden the politicians say that they need the professional support.

The developments in Denmark and Sweden seem to prove that the Norwegian investigator was right--the Nordic model of negotiation is no longer as useful as before, and parliamentarianism is growing stronger as politicians are emphasizing the determinative power.

Another important issue accompanies the weakening of the Nordic model. Is there a risk that a library association will become self-preserving and act as a conservative body? May it not be flexible enough to accommodate changes in society? Is this perhaps what has happened to the Danish and Swedish associations? There is always risk in changes. On the other hand, there should be less risk within a library association, as its members and representatives must always look to the future, orient themselves toward social development, and walk two paces in advance, in order to stimulate discussion and development, whether concerning cuts, book-stock management, or new technology.

This problem is not only within the library association, I believe. It rests more on the inertia within the communities toward realizing all the possibilities. Of course this problem reflects the harsh economic climate and attitudes. Also, in Denmark the librarians are accused by the politicians in the library journal of being restrictive and conservative by not letting new media in to the libraries at the expense of books. But the librarians believe their first responsibility is to see to it that there is enough economic space for the written word--for books.

How do we as professionals handle this new situation, with the demand from the politicians for stronger political power within the library associations? From the Swedish point of view, it is of great importance that we keep a good cooperative climate with the politicians. It is necessary that our professionals remain convincing, and that the politicians can rely on the opinions they receive. Conversely, the politicians must act so that the professionals can rely on their political judgment. I have always found this balance satisfactory for both sides within the organization and statutes of the Swedish Library Association. Representatives of the communities--politicians or librarians--are in the majority in determinative bodies within the association. The communities can elect only politicians if they wish.

Today, there is no solution to this debate. It is quite clear, however, that we as professionals must follow democratic rules. If the politicians want to take over the library association, the professionals must define their roles. We will accept neither a bad cooperative climate within the association, nor a bad financial situation for professionals, nor a situation in which the value of professionalism is hidden by the desire for power. Whether after this crisis the library association will exert political persuasion, and have politicians and professionals working together within it, is not yet known.

While these problems are under discussion, we will have access to good advice from another state committee, this time a Swedish one. Like the Norwegian investigation mentioned earlier, a new state committee will look into the structure of power and democracy in Sweden. Among other things, the public sector, the organizations, and the formation of opinions will be studied. I am sure that all the Scandinavian countries will get much nourishment for further discussion about the ideal library association.

* Margareta Torngren is a Member of the Executive Committee of the Swedish Library Association.

The Role and Importance of a Small Nation's Librarians Association Within the Multinational State

Martina Sircelj*

Longitude and latitude place Slovenia in the very heart of Europe and in the northwest Balkan peninsula. These two geographic facts indicate a dynamic history, full of changes which have been vitally important for the world, and especially for Europe. From the time of the Roman Empire, many important trade and military routes have led over our country. They have extended to the northern Mediterranean Sea, and from there to the rest of the world--to the south, to the east, to the west, and of course to the north. There are the Alps, and there lies the juncture of three states—Italy, Austria, and Yugoslavia.

In the first millennium A.D. the Slovenes, tenacious at life but cheerful, settled down. Today there are no more than two million Slovenes. The first written records in their language can be traced back to the end of the first millennium. Although periods of complete national and political freedom were rare and passing, the culture of language and script affirmed and preserved national identity. Throughout its history, the nation had neither an army, nor many kings or aristocracy; but it had a strong will to survive and to persist in the heart of Europe, at the juncture of Roman, German, and Slavic cultures.

The culture of writing preserved national identity and offered the opportunity for books to be printed, for development of librarianship, and for establishment of libraries. As in middle Europe, the culture of writing was developed in monasteries and in monastic libraries. Later, nobles established the first private libraries. The 16th century--the century of Protestantism--brought the first Slovene printed book and two centuries later, in 1774, the Slovene National Library was established. Slovene libraries were organized according to the rules common to all middle European libraries. Librarians were mostly teachers or professors who passed special courses to become professional librarians. Thus, not surprisingly, librarians--especially those who worked in the central, national library--became famous not only for their professional work but also for promoting and creating the national culture. The Slovene National Library has been a legal depository since 1807; under the French occupation (1809-13), it was the legal depository for the Illyric province. In Slovene, it is said, "They engaged for the Slovene national identity." They created a special cultural and political atmosphere, which was of vital importance to the existence of the small nation at the juncture of European political interests, which usually did not correspond to the demands for its national emancipation and political independence. These people, linked by common aims and work, formed a homogeneous power.

After World War I, which started on the Balkan peninsula (Sarajevo), close to our national territory, the new state was formed. Within its borders the Slovene nation received assurances of independence. These promises were not completely realized, for the new, multi-national state suffered serious economical and political crises. Slovenes entered the new state with developed cultural and educational institutions which in themselves provided a national identity: the theatre, the opera-house, primary and secondary schools, the Philharmonic Society (to which Beethoven had dedicated a copy of his Pastoral Symphony), and the National Library, which had the privilege of legal deposit for all of Yugoslavia.

Shortly after the war and the establishment of the Slovene University, the National Library took over all the functions of the Central University Library. Three different types of libraries existed in the country in the decades between the wars: school libraries, libraries established by various associations (club libraries), and the National and University Library. Librarians, particularly those employed in the National and University Library, slowly became aware of the importance of their profession. They dealt with many difficult questions which demanded immediate answers, but lacked a resource to solve these issues. The suggested solution came from the International Librarians Congress, held in Prague in 1926. After rather long negotiations among Yugoslav librarians from the three national centres (Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Beograd), the Association of Yugoslav Librarians was finally established. Since the law allowed only one professional association, separate national bodies existed only as sections of the Yugoslav association.

It is rather paradoxical that in the middle of central Europe, in a small country with highly developed literary culture, and with a rich library tradition, the professionalization of librarianship occurred rather late. Which were the most important problems for Slovene librarians to solve within their new association, or within its national section? First on the agenda was education of librarians--i.e., the organization of schools to determine professional status. Second came demands for a professional journal. Professional publications would disseminate lasting work in the field and, at the same time, would be instruments of information and education. The third aim was exhaustive research and analysis of professional work to solve problems of excessive variation and disunity in procedures and standards in such areas as the central catalogue, legal deposit, publishing of the national bibliography, inter-library loan, and the loan system in general. Finally, new buildings were needed, especially for the Slovene National and University Library.

In spite of their great efforts, librarians were allowed neither to publish their journal, nor to organize courses or schools. Some enthusiastic and unselfish librarians found hospitality for their articles in various contemporary reviews, while processing and the problem of library loans remained more or less the domain of individual librarians and depended solely on their professional education.

Slovene librarians, after years of endeavour for the new library building, succeeded in their demand. They were supported by Slovene intellectuals, members of Parliament, and by demonstrations of Slovene students. The new building was designed by a famous Slovene architect, Joze Plecnik, and completed in 1941, just before World War II. (Many of Plecnik's projects were constructed in Vienna and in Prague, and his vision of architecture is becoming more and more interesting to contemporary architects.) This building still houses the Slovene National and University Library, as well as the seat of the Slovene professional librarians organization, the Association of Slovene Librarians.

Although Slovene librarians are proud of the building, we are unfortunately dissatisfied with its functionality. The architect's vision was influenced by antique models, while we would prefer solutions corresponding to the contemporary demands of librarianship. However, the building holds the whole Slovene written heritage, as well as many of the world's unique publications. It is a symbol of our nation's culture--a nation which has never had great kings, but whose culture of writing, language, and books was a weapon which preserved its existence in the heart of Europe.

During World War II, our country witnessed unique cultural phenomena, non comparable with anything in Europe or in the world. The country, comprising two million Slovenes and 20 million Yugoslavs, was occupied by foreign armies. Slovenia

was parceled out between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Shortly after occupation, Adolf Hitler visited Slovenia and commanded: "Macht mir dieses Land wieder deutsch!" Slovene teachers, priests, and intellectuals were deported with their families to concentration camps and to other parts of Yugoslavia (Serbia). At the same time ordinary people, intellectuals, teachers, poets and writers, and artists and musicians started the revolt. They fought with both weapons and culture. Hospitals, military training-camps, and even printing workshops were hidden underground in the woods, in caves, and in well-concealed wooden huts. Printing shops were located in apartments, cellars, and attics of towns and villages of our occupied country. They printed not only military proclamations, but even illustrated school books for the liberated territory. Librarians of the National Library were anxious to preserve copies of these illegal publications, so many of them were kept well hidden in the library. The enemy knew of the illegal acquisitions, but despite many ransackings, these documents remained safe; some of them were discovered in their hiding places by librarians long after the war was over.

Deep in the forests, among Slovene intellectuals, new ideas on books, print, libraries, and schools began to spring up. The idea of general accessibility of books and printed documents as having special cultural and educational value was born there, along with the first visions of a public library. The idea of a public library was therefore conceived in the times of greatest distress, in the middle of occupied Europe. This valuable vision was realized only slowly after the war, because the nation's strength was exhausted.

Many ideas of which Slovene librarians could only dream in their first Association of Yugoslav Librarians gradually came to pass in the decades that followed the war. Above all, their organization was no longer an association of Yugoslav librarians, but a union of independent national professional societies, associated on the federal level.

Finally, the first schools for librarians were organized to provide education up to the first professional degree, and recently, work has progressed toward organizing education for the second professional degree. Slovene librarians began to publish their professional reviews in 1948, and professional sections and commissions discussed unified standards of processing and accepted (within the Yugoslav context) international standards. The first law on librarianship was issued in 1961 in order to determine the special importance and functions of this activity. The main functions of library education still remain, in spite of the schools for librarians, in the association's domain.

Professional awareness expanded and cumulated in the project of the general library-information system, which was accepted by the Slovene Assembly in 1971 and entirely defined in the law on the library-information system in 1982. Suggestions for the law, for the system, and for the operating standards for each kind of library were formulated and defined within the sections and commissions of the Association. Whenever professional problems, such as standards concerning different types of libraries and library material processing, extended over national boundaries, they were dealt with in the Union of Yugoslav Librarian Associations. Such adjustments do not influence the activity of libraries. Each national association has its own specialties and its own legitimacy of historical development. Yugoslav libraries are not uniform; there are notable differences among republics in the development and organization of libraries.

The eight national libraries are of special importance to the activity of the associations, as well as to the Yugoslav library-information system. They exchange material processed in accordance with the international standards of bibliographic

control, so that each national library keeps the material from its own republic and from all of Yugoslavia. The framework for cooperation among national libraries is provided by the Union of Yugoslav Librarian Associations and by the Association of Yugoslav National Libraries.

Contemporary computer technology not only provides new and better solutions to library operation difficulties, it also brings new dilemmas and problems. Currently, the harmony of the library system, so skillfully woven in the years after World War II, has split. The reason can be found in new technology which brought success and new professional solutions to certain types of libraries and revolutionized information systems. It might be stated that different profiles of library users caused the need for automation in special libraries. From one point of view this leads to two different systems: to the system of scientific and technical information on one hand and to the library-information system on the other. Some suggest that there should be only one system with certain parts supported by computer technology, while other parts do not need automation at all—at least for now. In the opinion of these theorists, information on documents and from documents can hardly be divided from the document itself—at least library users cannot see the difference. Such dilemmas result from the fact that some libraries have certain priorities in the acquisition of new technology and from their willingness to participate in common computerized data bases.

Professional efforts in the last few years have aimed at the following goals: library automation and mutual linkage on the basis of new technology. These subjects are now discussed in the professional sections and commissions within the national and Yugoslav framework.

* Martina Sircelj is a Member of the Council of the Slovak Library Association.

Persuading Politicians to Support U.S. Libraries

Eileen D. Cooke

Access to library and information services is a public good, in the national interest. This philosophy is well stated by one of our Founding Fathers and fourth President of the United States, James Madison:

> "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

The American Library Association (ALA), in an effort to help improve public library service and extend it to the millions of people still without ready access to even minimal service, opened a Washington Office in October 1945. Its main objective was to convince Congress of the vital need for federal aid to help stimulate state and local support for public library service in rural areas. Subsequently, the Library Demonstration Bill was introduced in both the House of Representatives and Senate on March 12, 1946 but was not finally enacted by Congress until ten years later. It was signed into law by President Eisenhower on June 19, 1956, as the Library Services Act.

This legislation, which was to help towns with populations of 10,000 or less to begin or to improve public library service, was the first U.S. federal aid for state and local library development. It was also a tribute to the persistence and determination of the leaders and membership of ALA.

Over the years, through the combined efforts of librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries, often working with community coalitions and state and national organizations, federal library programs have yielded over $3.4 billion in aid to help develop and improve library service throughout the country. The total breaks down as follows: Library Services Act/Library Services and Construction Act, 1957 through 1985—$1,399,621,750; Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1966 through 1981--$1,714,619,000; Higher Education Act, 1966 through 1985—$323,587,500.

It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of federal library aid is to stimulate greater state and local support, usually with requirements to prevent supplanting local support with national funding, and with provisions for federal funds to be matched by state or local funds. The net effect often results in doubling and even tripling total support for library activities.

Once library programs have won Congressional support and have been signed into law, there is no guarantee that they will be funded each year or continued beyond their initial period of authorization. For example, the Library Services Act of 1956 was first designed as a five-year demonstration to encourage the development of library service to people living in rural areas. Every five-year extension since the original act has required reaching out to library users in the communities, as well as to longtime supporters in Congress, to assure final success. Congress reacts most favorably to those issues their constituents indentify as valuable and essential. Scarce federal funds and heavy competition from other sectors of the education and public service

community mean constant justification of need for federal support and accountability for what has been accomplished.

For example, during the first 25 years of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), 17 million people benefited from public library services for the first time. In addition, 100 million people experienced improved opportunities for public library assistance; 171 million books were purchased with a mix of LSCA, state, and local funds; and 2,000 public library buildings were built or remodeled.

Since the 25th anniversary of LSCA in 1981, funds going to the state library agencies which administer these programs are increasingly targeted by law to services for people with special needs--the disadvantaged, the institutionalized, the handicapped, the aging, and persons with limited English-speaking ability. More than half of the Title I (Public Library Services) projects involve long-term, on-going activities and have some form of interlibrary cooperation. The state library agencies have been able to install or upgrade telecommunications linkages among public, academic, and special libraries because of LSCA Title III (Interlibrary Cooperation and Resource Sharing). And the states are actively participating in intrastate and multistate networks.

For the past four years, the President's budget has proposed eliminating LSCA, stating that libraries are a state and local responsibility and that the program has been successful in helping to make public library service available to virtually every community throughout the country. Despite this position, Congress has rejected these budget proposals and has continued and even increased funding. To some extent, the solid support for LSCA in Congress may be attributed to the 1979 White House Conference on Library and Information Services, which involved over 100,000 people during the course of the preceding state governors' conferences and the final national conference in Washington, D.C. These events helped to generate a greater public awareness of the benefits derived from LSCA as well as the needs and challenges still to be met in this information and technology driven age.

It is particularly ironic that the Reagan Administration budget would propose eliminating funding for LSCA in fiscal year 1986, while the budget documents note the serious national problem of adult illiteracy. The LSCA Amendments of 1984 include a new Title VI, Library Literacy Programs, which authorizes $5 million for grants of up to $25,000 for literacy projects directed to state and local public libraries on a competitive basis. Pending at this writing is a Senate Appropriations Committee proposal to appropriate $5 million to implement this new program. If finally approved, it would stimulate even greater effort to overcome a mind-boggling problem: 27 million adults in the U.S. are functionally illiterate.

The justification for this program is ample. Functional illiteracy costs the U.S. over $224 billion every year in welfare payments, crime, incompetent job performance, lost tax revenues, and remedial education. Among the unemployed, 75 percent have inadequate reading and writing skills. Illiteracy among prisoners is 20 percent greater than in the general population. Governments at all levels spend over $6.5 million annually on 700,000 prison inmates. Yet, literacy programs reach only 5 percent of adult functional illiterates.

To help combat the problem of adult functional illiteracy, ALA began in 1979 to train resource personnel who in turn trained others in the library field to conduct literacy programs. At the same time, the Association determined that its own training resources, and those of other literacy groups, were not sufficient. Accordingly, ALA

organized the Coalition for Literacy, a group of 11 national organizations, each with a distinct national and local role in the delivery of information and services. The organizations are: the American Library Association (which coordinates Coalition activities); the American Association of Advertising Agencies; the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education; B. Dalton Bookseller; CONTACT, Inc.; the International Reading Association; Laubach Literacy International; Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.; the National Advisory Council on Adult Education; the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science; and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education.

In addition to support received from the groups represented in the Coalition and other state, local, and grass-roots programs, the Coalition for Literacy received attention from the U.S. Department of Education. It is a major element in President Reagan's Adult Literacy Initiative which he announced in a ceremony at the White House on September 7, 1983 to leaders from Congress, education, business and industry, church and service groups, and state and local governments. During the course of the ceremony, President Reagan said, "If we're to renew our economy and protect our freedom, we must sharpen the skills of every American mind and enlarge the potential of every individual American life. Unfortunately, the hidden problem of adult illiteracy holds back too many of our citizens, and as a nation, we, too, pay a price."

On December 12, 1984, the Coalition for Literacy, in partnership with the Advertising Council, Inc., launched a national literacy awareness media campaign. The Ad Council will be developing professional television, radio, magazine, press, billboard, and hand-out materials to be aired, printed, and disseminated on a no-charge, public service basis, with an estimated donated broadcast and print value exceeding $20 million per year. The Coalition for Literacy is seeking funding to cover production and printing costs and for a clearinghouse to monitor responses to the three-year campaign. The drive's basic resource is a national toll-free hotline, staffed by CONTACT, Inc., a human service information agency. The free 800 telephone number refers callers to local literacy programs and resources. Where no programs exist and calls are numerous, the Coalition will help to establish new agencies. Also providing major support, financial and otherwise, for this national effort is the Business Council for Effective Literacy which was formed in late 1983 to encourage and guide business and industry participation in the fight against adult illiteracy.

Calling additional attention to the illiteracy problem and the role of libraries, Senator Claiborne Pell, a member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, inserted in the August 3, 1984 Congressional Record a report of the U.S. Department of Education, "Alliance for Excellence: Librarians Respond to a Nation at Risk". He alerted his colleagues to the report which had just been released and reminded them that the LSCA Amendments, which were then awaiting final action in Congress, included a new program to help eradicate illiteracy. He said:

> "One issue we are considering in the pending LSCA amendment is a special program to help eradicate illiteracy. Alliance for Excellence points out the storehouse of information open to us is incredible, made available through myraid computers and assorted high-speed telecommunications devices throughout the world.
>
> "However, all this information is lost if we cannot put it to use. Again, the report reminds us: 'A nation with... citizens who cannot read well enough to decipher a job application form must be convinced that a Learning Society is a practical, attainable goal. Every individual should have the knowledge to understand complexities that were never imagined in the past.

"This is where the library, allied with family and education, can come into its own. It has a golden chance to make a real difference. No other institution in the community is able to serve the Learning Society in quite the same way. No other has such cultural riches side by side with access to the myriad facts, figures, ideas, and impressions of the day."

Reflecting on the challenges laid out for libraries, Senator Pell announced that he would soon be introducing legislation proposing the second White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Indeed, on April 16 1985, he introduced Senate Joint Resolution 112, a bill calling for a White House Conference on Library and Information Services no later than 1989. An identical bill, House Joint Resolution 244, was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on April 18 by another long-time library supporter, Rep. William Ford, Chairman of the Congressional subcommittee to which the legislation would be referred for future action. The task now before the American Library Association will be to generate grassroots support for the bills in Congress.

One way to proceed would be to have ALA's Legislation Committee draft a resolution supporting the two Congressional bills and their purposes, and to have the ALA Council, the governing body of the Association, adopt the resolution. Then it would be disseminated to our State Library Association Chapter Presidents and Federal Relations Coordinators, urging them to communicate with their respective Congressional delegations and request support and sponsorship of the bills. Following that sequence of events and assuming considerable support, the ALA Washington Office would press for hearings in the appropriate House and Senate subcommittees to consider the merits of the proposals. Prior to the hearings stage, we would contact allies with mutual concerns for access to quality library and information services, and suggest that they also present their views at the Congressional hearings.

We also need to assess what our collective library and information resources are as a nation, and to consider what new directions we must explore in the future in the midst of a flood of information and increasingly sophisticated technology. Talk of information policy, transborder data flow, the global village, global economy, and the balance of payments often seems to be on a collision course with domestic and international copyright matters, freedom of information, preservation, and national security. All of these issues depend on access to up-to-date information to assist decision-makers with their solutions. Planning for a White House Conference can help us set an agenda to make libraries more responsive to such user needs in the years ahead.

Of the 20 to 30 issues that we routinely monitor in the ALA Washington Office, I would say those of most concern on a far-reaching and continuing basis have to do with domestic and international copyright, pay equity, postal subsidies, the American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) divestiture with its concomitant rate increases for the dedicated private lines libraries use, and proposals to downgrade federal librarians and contract out federal libraries, plus the effects of the Administration's circular dealing with the management of federal information. At stake with the latter issue is the viability of the nearly 1400 Federal Depository Libraries throughout the country which provide free access to government publications. Drastic curtailment of dissemination of these publications is proposed in the name of paperwork reduction and federal deficit reduction.

In writing about our information age in Megatrends, author John Naisbitt says, "The source of power is not money in the hands of a few, but information in the hands of

many. Information has become a natural resource as important as coal, iron, and oil in an earlier era." Since access is one of ALA's top priorities, we will continue to rally the troops—our community allies—to support these causes in the national interest. As E.J. Josey (ALA President, 1984-85) said in his inaugural address last year:

> "It is more important than ever that those of us in ALA must band together in a powerful unifying force to remind this nation that libraries not only support the demands of an information age but they also ensure an informed citizenry, which is essential to a democratic republic."

• Eileen D. Cooke is Director of the Washington Office of the American Library Association.

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